

ANATHEMA

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FREE

LATE AUGUST 2020



BLACK AUGUST

Fifty years ago this month, Jonathan Jackson stormed a California court room and took a judge hostage at gunpoint in an attempt to secure the freedom of his brother, George Jackson. This is the origin of Black August, a celebration of Black freedom fighters.

Looking a bit farther back, we see that George Jackson had been sentenced to 1 year to life for the alleged theft of \$70 from a gas station ten years before. George had grown increasingly politicized and became affiliated with Black Liberation struggles while locked up. He wrote letters frequently, which were later compiled into two books – *Blood in my Eye* and *Soledad Brother*.

Early in 1970, after being transferred to San Quentin prison with his comrade W.L. Nolen, Nolen and two others were shot to death by a guard following an alleged riot in the yard with the Aryan Brotherhood. Shortly after this, a guard was killed and George Jackson and two others were convicted of the murder. Jonathan's brave act followed, for which he was killed by the police. One year later, in August 1971, George was also killed while allegedly trying to escape. Three guards and two other imprisoned people were also killed.

Locally, also fifty years ago this month, a black child was killed by police in Philadelphia, and the locally held Black Panther Party National Convention saw its attendees strip-

searched in the streets by police before the media's cameras. As has been chronicled here before, what followed was the storming of a Cobb's Creek police station complete with trip wires tied to grenades surrounding the building. One cop was killed, Officer Von Colln, and two others wounded. For this act, five black men were imprisoned, including Muhammad Burton and the "implacable" Russell "Maroon" Shoatz. A sixth man evaded capture for more than twenty years, and was then acquitted after being arrested in Chicago in the '90's.

Maroon's indomitable spirit and anti-authoritarian attitude lead to several escapes and affiliation with the Black Liberation Army. He has spent more than twenty years in solitary, and there is an ongoing movement to free him, Muhammad, Mumia and Joe-Joe Bowen – all local Black freedom fighters. Maroon's birthday is August 23rd, coincidentally, and he will also be a primary beneficiary of funds raised at this year's Running Down the Walls on September 6th, presented by the Philadelphia Anarchist Black Cross.

"My pledge is to arms, my enemies are institutions and any men with vested interests in them, even if that interest is only a wage. If revolution means civil war – I accept, and the sooner begun the sooner done." – George Jackson ★

WHAT WENT DOWN

July 27 - At least four police vehicles are set on fire across the city [see cover photo].

July & August - Graffiti, stickers, and posters against police, repression, and in memory of people killed by police go up across the city.

August 17 - The former Philadelphia Housing Authority building on Chestnut St (now abandoned) is firebombed, allegedly by a houseless person angry at the PHA. ★

NEW PROJECTS IN TOWN

In the wake of the brief insurrection in Philly some new projects have sprouted. Here are the ones that we know about:

Philly Defender

A passion project intending to provide protective equipment to Philadelphians facing police violence. So far they have been building DIY shields and plan to gather other equipment to form a protest defense group. Check them out on instagram @defense4philly

The ACAB Press

A left-wing anti-police newspaper. They are looking for writers, editors, cartoonists, printers, etc. The paper is run by a group of non-affiliated collective focusing on “personal responsibility and critical thinking to act as an individual catalyst for change.” Find them on instagram @acabpress or send them an email theacabpress@gmail.com.

SPLASHH

South Philly Local Anarchist Soccer and Hockey Hooligans. A group aiming to make local sports safer and more accessible. They will be hosting free viewings of local soccer and hockey teams. Their instagram is @splashhooligans ★



“[W]e must harness civil war as emancipatory liberatory power. The fundamental goal is to break apart America into a constellation of federated communes.”

— *How it Might Should be Done*
by Idris Robinson



WHAT NEXT?

The uprisings have quieted down here in Philly, but the approaching electoral shitshow, combined with a rapidly deteriorating economic situation and pandemic-induced misery, not to mention the growth of right-wing vigilantism, indicate that things won't stay quiet for long. Here are some ideas for how we could prepare ourselves in the meantime:

- If you haven't already, figure out who lives near you who's like-minded and discuss how you can show up for each other in various types of crises (for example, evictions, fascist home visits, domestic issues, medical emergencies) without the state. Who has a doctor or nurse friend who'd be willing to make an emergency house call? Does anyone have a stash of medical supplies? What kind of self-defense resources do we have (and what do people feel comfortable with)? Who is good at deescalating dangerous situations? What are people's current or potential needs and what do they have to offer? What do we still need to get together in order to start offering our own options, in contrast to what the state provides? This is not hypothetical, as we all already face potential violent threats where we live, plus the possibility of further uprisings and federal intervention, and for most of us calling the cops would be more dangerous than helpful.

- Figure out what else you and/or those around you might need to get prepared for more street fighting, rioting, etc. The new Philly Defender shield-making project (mentioned elsewhere in this issue) is a great example.

- Consider what back-up food sources you and those around could use in case of emergency (i.e. economic or political collapse cutting off supply chains). Who is already guerrilla gardening or distributing extra food from their garden? What places are hoarding food and who's down to forcibly redistribute it?

- If clandestine action is something you're interested in, consider what you might want to go after in the case of future uprisings, insurrectionary moments, or states of emergency, and start figuring out how to do it. You also don't have to wait for a mass movement to get more experience with this now!

- Discuss with trusted people what you might be interested (or not) in doing during whatever nationwide crisis of state legitimacy is coming next, especially in the case of some kind of actual political collapse. What if some of us coordinated and/or inspired each other to take out something that capitalism and the state can't do without, for example its prisons? Remember nothing is impossible! :) ★



REPRESSION UPDATES

As the riotous atmosphere following the police killing of George Floyd cools, the state is punishing whoever it can for their alleged participation in the uprising. Many are sitting in cells as a result of local, state, and federal law enforcement.

The most publicly followed and publicized case is that of alleged arsonist Lore Blumenthal. She is accused of setting fire to two PPD cars during the rioting in Center City on May 30th. Blumenthal was arrested in her home by a mishmash of different local and federal law enforcement agencies, and faces up to 80 years in federal prison if convicted. According to her support site (welovelore.com), Blumenthal was denied an emergency appeal to be released to house arrest pending her trial.

Also facing federal charges are two men accused of an Ocean's Eleven style bank heist in the midst of the rioting along 52nd Street. Footage from May 31st shows a masked person in a blonde wig guiding an unidentified man operating a forklift, using it to carry away the vault of a Wells Fargo bank! The forklift was stolen from a nearby Lowe's. FBI have arrested Raphael Shaw and Xavier Nolley-Hall in connection with the caper. While little is known about Nolley-Hall, whose documents are under court seal, Shaw was tracked through social media, tattoos that local police recognized, and a car with a license plate linked to his name.

Anyone around in June remembers the "mysterious explosions" all over town that turned out to be a combination of fireworks and explosive ATM thefts. Two men have been arrested in connection to the use of explosives: state police arrested Talib Crump - accused of selling and possessing illegal dynamite - and federal law enforcement arrested David Elmakayes - accused of blowing up an ATM in Kensington. At least 50 ATMs were exploded in the period immediately following the George Floyd riots.

Two men are facing state and federal charges in relation to ATM theft and weapons charges. Steven Pennycooke and Shawn Collins, both felons, were alleged to be in possession of firearms while attempting to steal an ATM. Police say they found the men in a car on the same block as a safe from a nearby ATM.

The first major confrontation during the May 31st riots took place on Vine Street at the entrance to the expressway. State police blocked demonstrators from entering and the ensuing clash resulted in two PA state police cars being vandalized, one of which was torched. Six people, including one minor, have been arrested by PA state police, accused of taking part in the vandalism. Luke

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Crossman, Steven Anderson, Sammy Riviera, Francisco Reyes, William Besaw, and an unnamed minor we all taken into custody. Prior to his arrest, Sammy Riviera told followers on his instagram to be careful about posting photos on social media as they could lead to arrests and charges. Police used photos given to them by a photographer, facial recognition software, and social media to investigate the accused.

Consider supporting the accused. Lore Blumenthal, David Elmakayes, Shawn Collins, and Steven Pennycooke are all being held at the Federal Detention Center downtown. You can write them letters at the address below. Lore Blumenthal has a support website that posts updates on her care, welovelore.com. Everyone else discussed in this article could not be located in the state or federal system at the time of this writing. To look up an inmate online, visit inmatelocator.cor.pa.gov for state charges, and bop.gov/inmateloc for federal charges.

David Elmakayes #77782-066
Lore-Elisabeth Blumenthal #70002-066
Shawn Collins #69989-066
Steven Pennycooke #69988-066

FDC Philadelphia
Federal Detention Center
P.O. Box 562
Philadelphia, PA 19105

Without blaming people for their arrests (especially considering that they are innocent until proven guilty), we can learn from the police investigations and make ourselves less vulnerable to their repression. While no amount of security will make rebellion risk-free, these are some lessons we can take away from what police say they did to find and arrest people:

*Lock down social media and do not use it to share anything related to illegal activities. IE: no protest selfies or photos of looted goods, turning off location services at a protest or leaving the phone at home, not advertising illegal services publicly online.

*Do not discuss illegal activity with strangers. People can limit risk by only discussing illegal activity with their accomplices; bragging or chasing clout can land people in jail.

*Cover up. Tattoos, license plates, and faces were all used to identify and confirm people's identities. The more covered up someone is, the less the state has to work with.

*Do not photograph protests or illegal activity. Citizen photographers played a huge role in helping police identify and charge people. Photographing protests is dry

snitching at best; even if "no one is doing anything" it places people at the scene and can be combined with other photos and camera footage to build a better understanding of someone's movements.

*Do not talk to the police. Never answer any questions or consent to any searches. When dealing with the police, always ask for a lawyer and be aware of your rights. Cops can and will lie to people to get them to incriminate themselves. ★

DIE-OFF DEBATE

Assessing the environmental impact of industrial technologies and city centers leads many anarchists to conclude that these and other aspects of what we call "civilization" cannot but be exploitative and unsustainable. We tend to immediately encounter objections from most leftists and other radicals, though, who counteract this assessment by pointing out that reorganizing our lives to eliminate all exploitation would require a mass die-off of much of the world's human population, who would be unable to sustain themselves without our current food, medical, and other modern arrangements.

In reality, we are already in the midst of a global die-off that is much bigger than its human impact, although our interconnectedness means that eventually it will kill us all as well. The number of daily deaths due to the exploitative and noxious aspects of this civilization is impossible to estimate — we might include anything from car accidents and suicides to casualties of global warfare and colonization, as well as diseases, like cancer, that industrial capitalism created. Moreover, climate collapse is already causing a massive species-wide genocide on a much greater scale than what civilization's leftist champions imagine happening in the future.

In fact, even conservative scientific research estimates that over 250,000 human deaths are already occurring each year because of climate change (Jen Christensen, "250,00 deaths"). In 2018, leading climate scientists estimated that we had only twelve years before hitting a catastrophic multi-species tipping point, although others would argue that a global mass extinction event is already underway. As it stands, the human death toll could be up to billions in the next 80 years, especially because increasing shortages will inevitably lead to resource wars (see for example scientist William E. Rees, "The Climate Crisis May Wipe out Six Billion People").

Most of the technologies that we now use to distribute food and other basic needs require continuous energy, supplied by fossil fuels that ravage ecosystems and accelerate climate collapse. Those who argue that the mass distribution systems that capitalism invented must con-

tinue post-capitalism in order for everyone to survive are betting on so-called sustainable or “green” replacements for fossil fuels. These “green” technologies — batteries, power lines, wind and solar energy — are also highly resource intensive to produce, though, so much so that it outweighs their benefits.

Getting rid of capitalism and its profit motive will allow us, at the very least, to conserve energy and channel it into only the most important of human needs. Instead of inventing new exploitative energy sources, perhaps we can repurpose some of what has already been manufactured so that people who need electricity for certain medical conditions, for example, aren’t completely left by the wayside.

There is a deeper issue with leftist defendants of our current ways of life, though, which is that they seem to be unaware that other models for sustainable lifeways already exist and are highly functional without necessitating cities, agriculture, or central organization. Now that it is impossible to ignore how climate change is impacting us personally, engagement with ecological concerns and support for indigenous struggles against extractivism has become more popular among communists, but it’s not clear if there is a deeper understanding of the nature of the transformations (both practical and spiritual) that are needed in order to bring ourselves back into alignment with life rather than death.

Destroying civilization and reorganizing how we live is the only real and practical solution to the deep dynamics in this society, including exploitation and alienation, which would remain if we did away with capitalism but not with the infrastructure and organization that maintained it. Such a project is intertwined with that of destroying settler colonialism, which involves proceeding with the understanding that everything is interdependent and that we flourish as human individuals through mutual recognition of and respect for other life forms as well as other humans. Native and First Nations peoples have already been approaching ecological struggles through practices that reflect such mentalities, as they defend what remains of their historical homelands. Dine scholar Nick Estes writes:

“An accurate examination of the social and political causes of climate change and related forms of environmental harm demands that we take a close look at the history of genocide, land dispossession, and concerted destruction of Indigenous societies and cultural practices that accompanies the irreversible damage wrought by environmental destruction. The kind of racial capitalism that is anchored to colonialism and imperialism has only been made possible through Indigenous dispossession and the invention of colonial law that supports and upholds an economic and political system based on extractivism. Our strongest chance of restoring balance on the planet

and respecting the interconnectedness of all things, human and other-than-human, is to fervently advocate for justice for Indigenous communities and return to them the power of governance. Indigenous peoples currently protect 80 percent of the world’s biodiversity, and they carry disproportionate labor and risk on the front lines of environmental struggle all across the world — we should be taking our direction from them.”

The global ecological system is massively out of balance, and the mass deaths that we’re already seeing are part of the process of nature “correcting” it. There are certain natural laws of the earth that our colonizer leaders, despite their best efforts, will not be able to manipulate. This should also remind us anarchists to be humble in discussing these matters; us wanting something will not bring it about. We do not seek to “plan” some kind of post-revolutionary future, only to try to understand the stakes of what we’re dealing with, the consequences of our actions now and later, and to prepare for what may lie ahead.

If civilization continues as usual, the global population will grow to 10 billion people and global food needs will increase by 56% by 2050 (according to the French Institute for Demographic Studies and the World Resources Institute, respectively). Recommendations for mitigating these needs include reducing food waste (which is currently at least one third of food produced) and reforestation or otherwise restoring abandoned agricultural land. If we can dismantle capitalism, more options become available: rewilding, permaculture, guerrilla gardening, forest gardens, eating weeds and other foods that are not resource-intensive, but not recognized as nutritious by society. There’s roughly 915 million acres of farm land in the U.S. — what else could this land be used for? Climate change will also change what and where we can grow food, as temperatures continue to get hotter, deserts spread, and water is poisoned and depleted.

That people are debating whether a mass die-off now or later would be less unethical while this civilization is about to drown all of us on its sinking ship is really besides the point. It is thousands of years of this civilization that have created the circumstances we are in and the impossible terms of this debate — another reason to rage against it. The real questions have to do with what we can do, personally and collectively, to move towards autonomous subsistence.

More death and destruction is coming, whether we want it to or not. If we care about the fate of the humans at risk we can start moving towards eliminating its causes — whether agriculture, extraction, the military, police, borders — now, and building our own types of subsistence in whatever ways we’re able. ★

DIY DEFUNDING

“It’s tough, it really does put a strain on our ability to deliver the services that we need to deliver to the communities that we serve.”

— Philadelphia Police Inspector Sekou Kinebrew

Four police cars were set on fire one night in late July, and the Philly Police state that it directly interferes with them doing their job. This brings the total cars damaged since the George Floyd revolt to 93 in Philadelphia. The photos of the recently burned cars show more damage on the sedan-style cruiser than the van or the SUV where the tires were allegedly lit on fire. This could have to do with the larger gap between the frame and the tire on the latter models, or possibly be related to how long they did or did not burn before being discovered. As for the cruiser that was allegedly lit on its hood, the photo published by the media does not convey how much damage was sustained.

We write this amid news that a Pennsylvania man named Amir Johnson was killed down the shore by multiple police for carrying a broken bottle. Amid news that a nearby Upper Darby Township cop named Jonathan Resinski was fired for posting racist comments about sending black people back to Africa. Amid news that California’s former “top cop” Kamala Harris is trying to rise to even greater political prestige during ongoing revolts against the police and their corresponding state. Amid so much more murderous and contemptible business-as-usual, including yet another police shooting in Chicago that resulted in further upheaval the other night. And we never forget the type of statistics that state 40% of police have been reported for domestic violence.

As we go to print, we read of another black man who was shot in the back by police while leaving a store in Louisiana. Trayford Pellerin is dead.

Meanwhile, several hundred crimes are reported a night in Philadelphia – on weekends that number regularly tops 1,000. Ultimately few crimes are ever solved by police (a meager 2% according to a recent nationwide study). The Philadelphia Inquirer also reported last year that you had a better chance of winning a coin toss than being convicted for homicide, and national “clearance rates” for arson are less than a quarter of what is committed. The cops may in fact take attacks against themselves more seriously, but many a clandestine communique has reported slashing police tires and other activities that have never shown up in the news in any respect, let alone been solved. Which means that this/these unknown arsonist(s) stand a half decent chance of escaping charges.

The burning down of several OCF houses, an Amazon truck, two different cell phone towers, and possibly other targets around Philadelphia – all of which were either reported in the news or by anonymous communiques in the past few years – have similarly gone unsolved (to our knowledge). That also does not begin to address so many less dangerous vandalisms occurring throughout the city almost constantly, which are less often reported and certainly worth noting.

Speaking of other arsons, whose motivations are sometimes communicated along with their methods, we have also read of anarchists carrying out similar attacks the world over. The Philadelphia Police credit these recent attacks with the introduction of a molotov cocktail to the vehicles; others have cited placing firestarters beneath bottles of flammable liquids (Quebec and British Columbia), or using incense or “magic” relighting birthday candles as delays to light similar containers (Chile). One internet commentator even suggested that combining brake fluid and chlorine would combust at least one minute after combination, but we haven’t read any successful reports of its deployment yet.

The police report that they only have footage of one person of interest for these arsons that took place in four different places over an hour or two that night. While the damage done does not appear huge, the vehicles still needed to be towed away, cutting into police resources. As local community members speak of a sense of betrayal by the establishment in passing further funding of police, as seven different people have been picked up in Philly for attacking police equipment during the George Floyd uprising thanks to photos on social media (one of whom, Lore, is still denied bail two months later), and as Minneapolis is the only city that has even broached the topic of abolishing the police in the aftermath of the riots after they had a whole precinct burned to the ground, we begin to wonder if clandestine actions will begin to generalize?



BACK TO SCHOOL

“Reopening our schools is the lynchpin to reopening our economy,” an Indiana congressman says.

“The economy can’t reopen without schools,” says CNN
“There is no reason to cancel school, however, especially considering the steep economic costs,” says the NY Post

Without mandatory schooling, society would likely fall. Yes, the same society that is currently under question, if not attack, for the dismal state of affairs it perpetuates. Sacrificing lives for the economy, destroying lives through imprisonment, executing othered and criminalized people for existing in contrast to a police state – this is the status quo, this is society. It’s hardly controversial, and yet it is popularly reported that we must answer this

question about how to return children to school, or else the economy (the backbone of this society) will fail. This fits squarely in among the many reasons, however, that we should move *toward the destruction of schooling*.

“No one is going to give you the education you need to overthrow them. Nobody is going to teach you your true history, teach you your true heroes, if they know that that knowledge will help set you free.”

– Assata Shakur

The purpose of mandatory schooling is to train children, to indoctrinate them – curbing their wild impulses toward freedom, forcing them to conform to labor-based roles in a corresponding society. To mold children into good workers, administrators, and cops, with their previously indoctrinated parents and institutionalized teachers serving as the first authority figures in their lives, breaking their free spirits so that they may avoid anti-social behavior and its consequences – namely, prison. Meanwhile the education received furthers sublimating technologies and their earth-devastating industries in the name of progress.

“Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?”

– Michel Foucault

Those activists who acknowledge that a poorly funded education increases the likelihood of imprisonment for lack of legal income opportunities (or sometimes military service) are not wrong, but they are incorrect to believe that more and better education is the answer. Systematized education just perpetuates this society and its authority, rife with inequities that are necessary to maintaining it, further enabling their parents to carry out the work of the horrorshow that is society. Wealth can't exist without poverty, and a judge that imprisoned a teenager for falling behind on her homework last spring is just reality stripped of polite decorum.

So will they sacrifice the lives of children to a pandemic so that the economy *might* thrive? This seems increasingly necessary where there are not the resources to have children looked after by non-working parents, so again the burden falls on the most impoverished and marginalized people. Where, simultaneously, they are less likely to have adequate internet-based resources for that to be a realistic option, and this is still less often an option for the younger children. Some level of return has already begun, actually, and there are already suspicions that schools are muffling Covid test results under the guise of privacy laws.

For the youngest children where more accommodating resources do exist, Georgia Tech roboticist Ayana Howard recommends robots that analyze eye movements,

gestures, and facial expressions, as adept tools for educating children as young as five. The return to school is imperative, “otherwise the entire world will fall behind...” she concludes during a recent interview. The progress she proposes as an alternative, of course, is only the propelling of the present dystopia, while attempting to ignore the ever-increasing alienation of modernity.

If app-based screen-addictions haven't already fully interceded in the interpersonal, intentionally disconnecting us from physical human connection, then such modern solutions to civilized problems will finish the job – and once more, as discussed last issue, pandemics are a result of civilization. And since social media is proven to cause depression, also commonly considered a modern problem in itself, what will become of the children leading an increasingly digitized existence from birth?

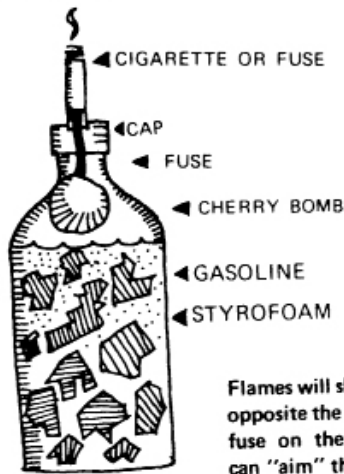
We only socialize through mediations. A necessity to surviving the pandemic, a further digitized existence becomes the new normal. And as it normalizes, so it becomes a necessity – like Kaczynski said of the automobile, which has since shaped our very world and dictates the way we traverse it. So went the phone, now a necessity to maintaining a legally-sanctioned existence. Children will imprint on robots and further lose the ability to connect with flesh-and-blood beings. There are already college-age people reporting on their summer pandemic road trips to popular media outlets, stating at 20+ years of age that this is their first authentic experience of the world that hasn't taken place through a screen.

Speaking of higher education, many students have already returned to dorms where they're immediately developing covid, and so the universities back-pedal. For those that do stay, especially to the ivy leagues where suicide rates have been particularly high in recent years, one can only imagine how the increasingly isolating and depressing existence of modern society will further these rates.

We mustn't be afraid of abolishing society, the schools that maintain it, and with it the corrupted sense of community that only functions as a form of policing. Such an incredible upheaval is scary, with no guarantees of success, but maintaining the course could be far worse (even through further reforms). Moves to decentralize our existence, returning to local and land-based ways of life, are the means to a thoroughly healthier existence. In the meantime, it's only through the destruction of every institution and their controls that we expand opportunities for freedom. Let's destroy school, let's destroy work, let's destroy the economy, let's destroy the nation-state – and if the teachers strike, may we join them in the streets in an attempt to further such an agenda.

“Forward, forward, forward, oh joyful destroyers.” ★

MOLOTOV (FOR PLACING)



Flames will shoot out in the direction opposite the fuse. Thus by taping the fuse on the side of the bottle you can "aim" the cocktail.

from *Steal This Book* (1971)

PSL, OCCUPATIONS, AND SOME BETTER POSSIBILITIES

Philly needs to step the fuck up. The rioting of May 31st-June 2nd was unlike anything that has happened in Philadelphia in decades. Widespread fires, looting and street conflict beyond the capacity of PPD to effectively control, not to mention the supposedly, "over 50" explosive ATM expropriations. This is why it's so frustrating that this momentum seems to have dissipated so quickly here. Barely three days of open conflict before the situation was back under control. One (albeit brutal) 15 minute round of crowd control on I-676 and the consensus among even radical 'activists' seemed to be that it was just too dangerous to continue openly confrontational action. The force used by police in mainly Black working class neighborhoods in West Philly was more intense but took longer to quell the conflict, which died down while white people and others from around the city failed to effectively act in or in tandem with those neighborhoods. Clearly widespread rioting of this sort does not result solely or even mainly from the actions of anarchists or other 'radicals', but the possibility to exacerbate the uncontrollability of the situation was clearly there, and at least momentarily, we have failed to take advantage of this possibility. Instead, it seems most anarchists efforts have been plugged into simply supporting whatever large demonstration is organized for the coming Saturday hoping that something pops off (which invariably never happens), organizing (necessary) mutual aid and legal fund drives, and sparse and isolated night-time attacks. We can do better than this.

One factor playing a role in this deescalation is the predominance in recent Philly protests of PSL, the Party for Socialism and Liberation. PSL is an offshoot, or perhaps a front organization, for the Worker's World Party, a Stalinist organization (recently boosted by popular Philly

'Movement' IG influencer @phreedomjawn) which itself split from the Socialist Worker's Party in 1959 over the issue of the future WWP's support for Mao Zedong and the 1956 Soviet crushing of Hungarian libertarian socialist rebellion against Stalinism. As is well-documented in the article available on Libcom, "An Investigation into Red-Brown Alliances: Third Positionism, Russia, Ukraine, Syria, And The Western Left", the WWP held positions such as defending and later denying the Tiananmen Square Massacre, defending the Khmer Rouge until 2000, defending authoritarian war criminals Idi Amin, Slobodan Milosevic, Ratko Mladic, denying the Bosnian genocide, praising Saddam Hussein, and denying the Kurdish genocide and Halabja massacre committed by him. PSL holds similar positions on the Tiananmen Square Massacre and Slobodan Milosevic, and still holds joint events with WWP and defends many of their positions. The cofounder of PSL also frequently hosts a menagerie of far-right and conspiracist figures on his podcast, as well as at public events. These characters include followers of the fascist Lyndon Larouche, 9/11 truthers, Infowars contributors, Holocaust deniers, Islamophobic ex-CIA officers formerly involved in spying on leftists, antisemites, and supporters of Saddam Hussein. High-level members of PSL, WWP and PSL's 'antiracist' ANSWER Coalition helped organize a 2014 conference called "Right of Peoples to Self-Determination and Building a Multipolar World", where members of the neoconfederate League of the South and the Texas Nationalist Movement participated alongside Italian National Bolsheviks and other far-right groups. In January of this year members of the Traditionalist Worker's Party and Patriot Front were documented by Colorado Springs Anti-Fascists enthusiastically taking part in a PSL/ANSWER Coalition anti-war protest in Denver this year where protest marshals did nothing to kick them out despite being warned they would show up.

PSL's recent actions in Philly have been about what you'd expect. Peace-policing, vanguardism, constant photographing by PSL photographers, radical rhetoric and reformist demands, kneeling with hands up in front of riot cops in combat formation, "no justice, no peace" chants at a completely peaceful protest, speeches about how all politicians are pigs immediately before happily introducing a State Representative candidate. The highway blockage on 676 seems like the only possibly successful demonstration they've recently pulled off, but the lack of a well-defended exit route is an obvious failure.

PSL's 'March Against Racist Vigilantes' in South Philly was particularly disappointing, instead of going south from Broad and Snyder to Marconi Plaza, the site of racist vigilante violence in the name of defending the Columbus statue, the march went north to City Hall. At City Hall the march stopped and quietly listened to a series of speeches for around 2 hours in the 90 degree heat and sun while the crowd slowly dwindled from around 500 to around 100-

200. Straining to hear the speakers over the insufficient sound system, and trying to be respectful listeners, there was very little dialogue and connection between members of the crowd. The situation had been similar on the way North, as the constant chants precluded most meaningful networking. As the crowd marched South again, protest marshals discouraged people from walking in front of the banners and megaphones in the name of letting people catch up, with the added effect of solidifying PSL control of the marches direction and tone. As the event officially ended on the way back to the meetup point, a far smaller group of around 30 independently continued further South to Marconi Plaza without the support of PSL leadership. Followed by several hundred bike cops and several patrol cars, the smaller contingent found several hundred racists at the Plaza, many drunk and all extremely combative, some openly armed with baseball bats and other weapons. Police formed a weak line separating the two groups and perimeters around the antiracist group, with one line facing from behind those actively shouting and trying to confront the vigilantes, trapping them between two police lines while the vigilantes were free to roam around the edges of the police encirclement. At least one police helicopter circled the area and it seems painfully clear that there were almost no tactical opportunities for the antiracists in this situation. The event ended with several fights, and arrests on both sides, with the antiracist side predictably receiving more arrests before dispersing in small groups in a hostile neighborhood. The day after the city announced recuperatory plans to possibly remove the statue.

The rationale PSL gave for marching North was that it wasn't safe for black, brown and LGBTQ people to go South. This was undoubtedly true, but many who showed up seemed surprised by the fairly unpublicized plan to go North and had expected to be actively confronting the vigilantes. The end result was that those black, brown, LGBTQ and other people who did predictably make the decision to go South ended up vastly outnumbered, tired from walking and standing in the hot sun for nearly 4 hours, with little connection or opportunity for actually organizing with others in the crowd, and in a far more dangerous situation than would have resulted had the entire crowd gone South. The initial crowd for the march seemed to outnumber the opposition and could have stood a decent chance at successfully facing down the vigilantes and possibly even pulling down the statue. While those who did go to Marconi clearly lost the confrontation, it seems that the city decided that further clashes and bad press at the statue weren't worth it and that this is what caused the decision to possibly remove the statue. This decision by the city doesn't change any material conditions and is an obvious attempt at recuperation and deescalation, but it goes to show how much more effective these types of confrontational actions are even at getting reforms than the reformist-oriented protests PSL

organizes.

We should stop hoping that PSL and affiliated organizations' actions will spontaneously turn into situations like the riots on May 31st. PSL is clearly acting in an opportunist manner, and the nature of their demands (and the fact they're making demands in the first place) such as "Money for jobs and education", electing 'progressive' local candidates, universal basic income, and a 30 hour work week, are clearly not going to lead to any kind of real break with the present order.

Part of the blame for PSL's seeming monopoly on large street demonstrations lies with PSL's authoritarian tankie nature and intentional cooptation of spontaneous uprising. We'd be lying to ourselves if we said it was all their fault though. Perhaps it's out of an avoidance of accusations of 'infighting' or 'not following Black leadership' that public criticism of PSL has been largely absent and relatively few independently organized confrontational crowd actions have occurred. Perhaps the more confrontational among us are too fed up with the recuperative nature of most marches to continue to engage with mass movements. But there is a clear possibility for insurgent breakdowns of logistics of control when so many people are acutely feeling and acting their outrage. The conditions that led to the riots here have not changed, and active frustration and rage seems likely to soon build back up again. Further, while it's obvious that not enough points of rupture are being created, there are still a larger amount occurring than normally. While buying into mainstream social movements in their entirety is not going to get us where we want, and we shouldn't wait for the next publicized uprising or 'movement' to act, failing to take advantage of the opportunities for attack and possibility that these moments offer is also a failing.

What follows are some hints at cracks in the walls to pry at. Not prescriptions, but germs for possible action and places where lost opportunities seem most obvious. Sometimes it seems like we lose sight of the need for active and imaginative probing of what will be effective in our particular situation, instead simply throwing our weight behind what everybody else is doing, continuing to do what we've always done regardless of the specific conditions, or sitting on our hands when what's being publicly done seems ineffective.

One observation that was particularly striking to me was the relative lack of combative antifascist activity during the recent peak of racist and fascist vigilante activity in Northeast and South Philly. Once upon a time Philadelphia was a city with one of the most actively confrontational antifa groups. I personally don't know the particular reasons for why this group seems to have dissolved as a collective (or if it has). However the fact that there was no real response to the numerous beatings, vigilan-

te anti-rioting and looting squads, racist shows of force, and fascist propaganda and activity from Proud Boys and Patriot Front members, is disheartening. Some Marconi Plaza racists were quickly doxxed, but little direct follow-up action seems to have been taken using this information, and many more right-wingers at Marconi Plaza had their faces exposed and were publicly posting about the events on Instagram and Facebook. I believe many people are willing to take this on, but lacking networks able to act in this way, it's going to be difficult to effectively disrupt enemy organizing when at least in South Philly, far right forces are able to assemble crowds of several hundred, many armed and in better fighting shape than most of us. There are many anarchists, antifascists, and rebels in general in South, but there is also a high number of outright fascists, racists, pro-police vigilantes, good citizens and 'patriots'. If insurgent conditions are to be aggravated in South, conflict with these forces is inevitable and we need to build up our capacity for defending uprising and attacking these strongholds of reaction.

Another area our knives could be sharpened is in the current practice of occupations. The brief occupation of the outside areas of Hahnemann Hospital and the several encampments fighting for housing, resource access, and against the Philadelphia Housing Authority show certain promising aspects, but also tactical and strategic failings. Certainly, the capacity to care for each other outside of capitalism and the state needs to be a fundamental aspect of revolt, and occupiers were right to target Hahnemann Hospital and the healthcare system in general. Making connections with nurses and doctors willing to work outside the official system is also crucial. Acting on common cause and creating coordination with houseless people and others experiencing some of the most extreme violence and alienation inherent in our society is extremely important. The squatting of PHA-owned houses by houseless people in conjunction with housed 'activists' is a very encouraging step in the right direction. As long as our networks and activities are mainly composed by white working class and middle class individuals within our narrow subculture, and the revolt of the mainly Black so-called 'lumpenproletariat' remains separated from ours, generalizable revolt will be a difficult bridge to cross. This doesn't mean we have to try and convince 'the people' to take up anarchist war on society, but failing to make accomplice-ships and relationships of solidarity with others in the street who feel the all-consuming devastation of this civilization is the wrong move.

The strategy of occupations seems insufficient. Securing safer and more resourced encampments is a worthwhile intermediate goal to be sure. And occupying space and time on our own horizontal terms is of course the place we want to go. However as a method of struggle, occupations have shown themselves inadequate. In order to have the freedom to live and experiment together in new,

more liberated ways, to create autonomous zones, a situation of rupture and inability of counterinsurgent forces to effectively operate control is necessary. If we could all currently flesh out an imagination of just how we would like to live, it would not be worth living that way. As the May '68 graffiti referenced in the classic insurrectionary text 'At Daggers Drawn' reads, "How can one think in the shadow of a cathedral". Occupations often, as in the example of the Occupy movement, end up defending the small occupied site as an end in itself, instead of working to spread insurrection more generally. Insurgencies are successful to the extent that they can spread throughout society and the environment, effectively coordinating between groups and individuals while remaining autonomous and engaging occupiers in constant withering attacks and avoiding frontal conflict. We are strong when possible insurgents and the spaces where they might attack are unknowable, and distributed throughout the entire territory. When policing forces can effectively isolate conflict to specific zones and individuals, insurgents are at a severe disadvantage. 'Occupations' of public squares etc. can be an effective tactic when they serve as an uncontrollable gathering place for insurgent people, who are willing to leave the site of the occupation to regroup and attack in other locations where the police have less of a force concentration. An example of this kind of dynamic could be the spontaneous movements of people away from City Hall on May 31st which led to the rioting on the less defended Chestnut and Market streets. Generally when the police aim to take a location, we should fight them to inflict damage, draw more of them into concentration, and get away safely, in order to attack other less policed locations; when they respond to those new locations, perhaps we attack again at the original one. Mobility is of the essence; avoiding static, extended confrontation when we are outnumbered, surrounded or otherwise at a tactical disadvantage is extremely important. Staying tight can be necessary within each smaller mobile contingent or affinity group, but attempting to concentrate all our forces into one 'cohesive' crowd is the exact wrong move, and also facilitates attempts to control the crowd by self-appointed leadership. The writings of anarchist theorist Tom Nomad and the Institute for the Study of Insurgent Warfare contain invaluable notes on these dynamics of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

If we want broader revolt in Philadelphia, we will have to really act. Not just support what's already happening, and not act as if nothing is happening. Now is the time to build dependable and effective affinity groups that can act in the neighborhoods, not just Center City. We should not be afraid to criticize recuperative, counter-insurgent tendencies in 'The Movement' just because our friends are working with those tendencies, these are precisely those which we must delegitimize as feasible forces of revolt. 'Dividing the movement' is worthwhile if we are dividing ourselves from ineffective and counterproduc-

tive formations. And certainly now is not the time to be gripped with fear. The police are terrifying, but they too can be terrified, and many are now and always. Tear gas is painful and harmful, but it is very unlikely to kill you, and the panic can become easier to deal with the more you get used to it. Respirators, helmets, shatterproof goggles, forearm guards and a cup can provide good protection from most forms of chemical and kinetic crowd control munitions. A 'peaceful' crowd will tend to stay that way, and it's hard to be the first person to start fucking shit up, but someone has to do it, and once a successful offensive act has been committed many more people often feel emboldened and will join in. We should be careful about escalating when the crowd contains children and elders, or when we are at a severe disadvantage, but we should remember that no leadership really 'owns' a protest once it starts, and any above-ground protest organizer is unlikely to play much of a role in turning a protest to a riot or something else, simply as a legal best practice. Obvious exceptions aside, (such as vigils or rallies to spread information we haven't already heard a thousand times before, and which isn't simply a recruitment drive or photo opportunity) we should be less shy about 'instigating'. Another encouraging possibility is anonymously or privately organizing our own events. As an example, the recent Juneteenth noise demo outside the Federal Detention Center in Philly shows how much can be accomplished even with small numbers. Graffiti on walls and police vans, fireworks, smoke bombs and the connection of revolt and solidarity inside and outside the walls shown by prisoners flashing their lights and banging on their windows is much more than most mass marches achieve, (with no arrests!) and with only an estimated 25 people in attendance. Webs of trust and affinity between our friends and their friends should make it not too difficult to gather this many people if we really tried. Effective and easily replicated attacks like the recent torching of 4 police cars across the city overnight in Philadelphia are another possibility. As the Twitter account New York Year Zero recently pointed out, besides the arrests of Urooj Rahman, Colinford Mattis, and Samantha Shader for unsuccessful alleged arson attempts on police vehicles, there have been no arrests for any of the "13-60" successful arsons of police vehicles in NYC during the uprising. The communique for recent burnings of cop cars in Montreal gave some simple suggestions for how to accomplish this using a delayed, easily made device (a half-filled plastic bottle of half gas half motor oil on its side with a fire cube taped on top placed under the engine block next to the front tire). 'Ninja rocks' (ceramic spark plugs broken into sharp pieces to quietly and very efficiently shatter windows) could also be used if the seriousness of arson charges is a deterrent, if not, a road flare could be thrown into the back seat through the broken window to quickly engulf the vehicle in flames. Fireworks, paint-filled fire extinguishers, lasers, smoke bombs and homemade flashbangs (dry ice dropped into a

water-filled 2 liter soda bottle right before deploying the device, a potentially useful diversion a few blocks from an action) along with proper protective gear such as helmets, respirators, goggles, a cup etc. can also be very useful and accessible force multipliers we could make more use of come the next round of street confrontation. Tagging, stickering, and shoplifting are effective and fairly easy practices many of us already have experience with, and which give useful experience and many of the same skills needed for getting away with bigger actions.

The possibilities are many. Will we be anarchists just in theory or anarchists in practice? It is frightening to be faced with the possibility that there is little stopping oneself from really acting. The police and our other enemies are certainly frightening as well. But it is more frightening to live in fear, the soul-crushing drudgery of everyday life, and the disappointment of one's dreams remaining dreams simply because we chose not to act when we could have. Let's do more of what we're capable of. ★

THE ONLY POSSIBLE DIALOGUE WITH THE POWER IS THE ATTACK

UNRESTRICTED SOLIDARITY
WITH MÓNICA AND FRANCISCO



And it is by this means of anarchic combat from where we contribute to the spread of the revolt, betting on taking conflictivity to unexpected limits, denying in fact any peace and constitutional agreement that seeks to direct our lives.

A N A R Q U I A . I N F O

Chilean comrades caught up in yet another iteration of the 'Bombs Case'



17.

what the fuck do I care about the Law

a fifty-year-old woman with a shopping bag enters a store saying today
she shops for free

the shelves of the new supermarket Fedco glistened white and empty
while a mush of various foods stained the floors

when I left the area was on fire and the flames seized the small amount
the looters had left behind

jets of black water from the broken hydrants swept away what remained
of the plunder to the center of the street

we're going to take what we want and what we want is what we need

Nanni Balestrini
excerpted from *Blackout* (1980)